

of us. But we can let our neighbor die with no thought what-ever. That's his concern not mine. And here again our neighbor is not the fellow that lives next store. It's anyone and everyone we come into contact with. This is our Christian duty of love. This is the way the Master went and we must walk it too.

Helen Steiner Rice wrote a poem entitled, "The Magic of Love."

Love is like magic and it always will be,
 For love still remains life's sweet mystery!
 Love works in ways that are wonderful and strange
 And there's nothing in life that love cannot change!
 Love can transform the most commonplace
 Into beauty and splendor and sweetness and grace!
 Love is unselfish, understanding and kind,
 For it sees with its heart and not with its mind!
 Love is the answer that everyone seeks--
 Love is the language that every heart speaks--
 Love can't be bought, it is priceless and free,
 Love like pure magic, is a sweet mystery!

THIS IS THE LOVE CHRIST TAUGHT, & THIS IS THE LOVE HE SHOWED WHEN
 HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR US. LET US EACH TRY TO REFLECT UPON THIS
 LOVE IN OUR LIVES DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON & LET US EACH TRY
 TO CHANGE OUR LIVES TOWARD THIS END.

LET US PRAY

St. John Lutheran 9:30 5/3/68

*Processional Hymn 207
*Call to Worship Pg. 145
*Confession of Sin
*Assurance of Pardon
Responsive Reading Sel. 22-574
Hymn 161
Scripture Genesis 22:1-19
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed
*Prayer and Response
Anthem
Announcements
Offering, Prayer
*Hymn 221
Sermon
Prayer to Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 475
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen
*Postlude

CHURCH TONIGHT

YOUTH TUES. MORNING 10:00 AM.
WOMEN OF FM. WILL MEET AT
ST. JOHN'S FOR PRAYER & MEAL.

Salem Lutheran 11:00 5/3/68

*Processional Hymn 159
*Call to Worship Pg. 145
*Confession of Sin
*Assurance of Pardon
Scripture Genesis 22:1-19
*Gloria Patri
*Apostles Creed
*Prayer
Anthem
Announcements
Offering, Response, Prayer
Hymn 141
Sermon
Prayer to Lord's Prayer
*Hymn 479
*Benediction
*Threefold Amen
*Postlude

~~ALL CHURCH MEETING~~

YOUTH FELL. 6:30

Call to Worship: O magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together.

Call to Confession: Come to me all ^{you} who labor and are
heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke
on you and learn of me; for I am gentle and lowly
in heart, and you will find rest for your souls;
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light, saith
the Lord. Let us come to Him confessing our sins.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon; The Lord is merciful and gracious
For as the heavens are high above the earth, so
great is His steadfast love toward those who fear
Him; ~~for as~~ as far as the east is from the west,
so far does He remove our transgressions from us.
Amen.

N.B.L.

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH MEET AT CHURCH AT 7:15
THURSDAY APRIL 15TH TO GO TO COUNTY HOME.

LINDA ACHENBACH IS IN ROOM 721
MEMORIAL BLDG. POLYCLINIC HOSPITAL
THANKS FOR FLOWERS.

MRS. MAGER IS HOME
MRS. MARRON STILL IN POLYCLINIC

TRINITY CHARGE--THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph C. Link, Pastor
Christ Church, Duncannon 9:00 A.M.
Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 10:30 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP March 28, 1971

The Organ Prelude

*The Hymn of Praise 153

*The Call to Worship

*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Our Father, we do not want to come to thee to confess our rebellion against thee. In shame we try to hide our wild spirits. Yet we are compelled to prostrate ourselves before thee, for there is nothing within us that can bring us peace. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, that by thy grace the warfare that we know so well may cease and we may worthily honor thy name and render unto thee an acceptable offering of our lives; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*The Kyrie

*The Assurance of Pardon

The Scripture----Genesis 22:1-19

*The Gloria Patri

Author (Trinity)

Pastoral Prayer

Announcements

The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings

*The Doxology

*The Offertory Prayer and Lord's Prayer

The Hymn of Meditation 156

The Sermon----Lenten Reflections

"The Sacrifice of The Son"

The Sermon Prayer

*The Hymn of Response 221

*The Benediction

*The Threefold Amen

*The Postlude

*Congregation Stands

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The celebration of the Lord's Supper will be observed in both churches on Easter Sunday, April 11th. Your Pastor will officiate. At this time we will also receive into membership anyone desiring to unite with us in Christian fellowship. Please contact the Pastor if you are interested or know of someone who is.

The Lord's Supper will be observed in the homes of our shut-ins either before Easter or shortly thereafter. Please help your Pastor by submitting the names of all of our shut-ins to him, so that no one is overlooked.

TRINITY CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mid-Week Community Lenten services will be held Wed. evening March 31st at 7:30 P.M. at Carson Long Chapel. A movie will be shown.

GEN.

Text; Genesis 22:8

In the Pericope- which is a fancy word for a calendar of the Church year, our Scripture for today is one that is suggested to be used for this first Sunday of Lent. Many of our churches follow the Pericope very closely. I check the ~~the~~ Scripture- for each appropriate Sunday, but generally I do not feel too free using a set pattern all the time. Mostly I have refrained from following the Church year too closely. But in my search for a certain theme to be followed during this season, this Scripture gave me the idea that I needed. We are going to try to picture and think through, just what were the things- that Jesus needed to go through this ordeal which He undertook. What were some of the things- that sustained Him as He traveled to the end of His journey. This is what we will be trying to discover as we once again start on the journey that leads to Jerusalem and the cross.

Just picture in your mind- if you will the setting of our Scripture today. Abraham was spoken to by God and he responded by doing as he was told. He responded to the least detail and was even in the process of slaying his son when God intervened. This story teaches us many lessons that can be compared with the life of Christ. But first we should look at this story a little closer. The background will perhaps explain this more fully.

During the time of Abraham the sacrifice of children was a more or less common thing. In fact they not only practiced human sacrifice, but they did it at what they believed was divine command. If a man thought this today and his thought- became known he would be placed in a mental institution. Worse yet if he performed this act he would be convicted of murder and executed or imprisoned for life. This story is rather disturbing to anyone reading it and it requires- that we look at all of its different aspects to discover the real truth.

This story is perhaps placed in the Bible to show that

Abraham's love and devotion to his God, was capable of making him sacrifice his son to prove this love. The use of human sacrifice was a custom among some of the Canaanite tribes. It had been practiced for centuries. In the time of Elisha around 800 B. C. during a crisis of battle for the Moabite capital, the king of Moab quote, "Took his eldest son who was to succeed him and offered him as a sacrifice on the city wall." Unquote. This quotation is found in II Kings 3rd chapter the 27th verse. This sacrifice was made to a pagan god, and if men worshipping pagan deities could carry their religion to that extreme how could Abraham show that his religion meant as much to him. The only way would be to do as they did. Therefore the story represents very authentically what must have gone on in Abraham's mind. Here was a great leader of his people. He is living in a crude age. All around him are obedient people showing their faith to their pagan gods. In spite of his torment & his love for his son, he kept hearing an inner voice telling him to sacrifice his son. It could well be that because of his mind dwelling on these thoughts, the thought pressed upon his conscience and he interpreted it as being the voice of God. Whatever the case may be, the climax of the story is the real revelation of God. The voice of God proves to say something quite different from what Abraham thought it was saying. The climax is that God does not want Isaac to be sacrificed. The story ends on a note of happiness instead of tragedy. God showed Abraham that the true test of a person's love isn't determined by his willingness to sacrifice, but by his faith.

Many earlier generations took this text very simply and uncritically. To question any part of the Bible was close to blasphemy. But we are living in an altogether different age. People do ask questions, and quite naturally they want answers. I think this is a healthy sign. It not only shows that people are interested in their religion, but it helps to strengthen their faith. Then, too they are not compelled to accept something blindly, in which they neither believe nor understand. But here again we must remember

that we should question reverently. Not with the intent to tear the Bible apart but to get at the truth. So if we question this bit of scripture in this light we find, that it was not the will of God that Abraham should sacrifice Isaac. God never required that we sacrifice in this way. He revealed His real nature the moment he stopped Abraham from killing Isaac. Abraham was blessed because he was willing to obey God's will which he believed required the sacrifice of his son. He was blessed because he willingly would have gone to the limit to show his love. This sort of spirit always makes a man capable of greatness. Abraham was completely committed to what he believed. When everything a man has is committed to what he believes, he can go far. Would that all of us were of this mind. But unfortunately we always hold back a little. We question what if, instead of completely giving ourselves over to God's will.

The story of Abraham and the story of Jesus are very similar. There is naturally one great difference. This is that one is about a man, his son and his God. The other is about a God and His son. ^{AND HUMAN} There are several parallels in these two cases. One is the faith shown by Jesus and Abraham. Each one trusted God to the extreme. Each one had complete faith that God would see them through, that God would work things out whatever way He chose. That no matter the outcome God would be glorified.

We have already stressed the faith of Abraham, but what of the faith of Jesus? How could He accept such a fate as He did? The only possible explanation is the fact that He leaned completely on God. Jesus questioned this fate. After all who wouldn't? But when He had determined that this was the way and there was no other choice, He accepted it. This is a case of faith at its strongest. We cannot begin to fathom what it would take to have faith like this and to give up everything including life itself.

The second parallel is sacrifice. The sacrifice of Abraham was to be human. But so was the sacrifice of God. Then the sacrifice of Abraham was to be his son, but then so was the sacrifice of God. Then we come to a paradox instead of a parallel. The sacrifice of Abraham was done for love of

God and the sacrifice of God was done for the love of man. ~~We don't go into the love involved in the act of Jesus' death as we will cover this at another time.~~ ~~But~~ ^{WE} can see the similarities between the two acts, ^{WHEN WE VIEW THEM TOGETHER.} As our thoughts today are directed to these two familiar scenes, we should be thinking just what it is these happenings mean to each of us personally. What is God saying to us today? I think first He is showing us the perfect example of faith and trust in Him in the story of Jesus. If we could each possess this complete, unquestioning love and faith to our father, can you imagine what His Church would be like? All the problems and difficult situations of the Church would be solved. Really there are no problems in the Church. This may sound surprising but I think it is true. I think all the problems are man made and caused by our narrow minded human way of handling things. The real problems are caused by the people who make up the Church. Many times our faith is so shallow and we don't have the complete trust in God that we should. We are hesitant to turn things over to Him because maybe He won't solve things as well as we ^{CAN} ~~would~~. Therefore we hold back and hesitate and all we need do is to trust in Him completely and our problems would be in His hands. This is what I believe ~~God~~ God is trying to say to us in our present day. He is beckoning us with the words of Jesus, "Come to me all you who labor and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Then I think that God is trying to tell us today as well as He did in Jesus' time that He does not want our sacrifices as much as He wants our love. The prophets in the Old Testament preached against sacrifices. Hosea states that God says quote, "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." Unquote. So you see all God wants from us is our love and obedience. We can bring all the offerings we want to God but they amount to nothing if we do not give ourselves to Him. Our offerings are meaningless if our lives are not lived close to God. The sacrifice which Jesus made is the sacrifice that God gave to us. If we accept

Jesus we not only inherit the eternal life promised to us, but we show love to God by accepting His gift, which was so freely given. Our faith should be the thing that is the sustaining force in our lives. If our faith is as it should be then we can sing in our hearts, ~~the glad sound of~~, "My faith looks up to Thee, Thou lamb of Calvary, Saviour Divine: Now hear me while I pray, 'Take all my guilt away, O let me from this day be wholly Thine. Let us pray.